

**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**  
**Montpelier, Vermont**

**TEAM:** Independent and Federal Programs

**ITEM:** Will the State Board of Education grant renewal of independent school approval, to serve students in grade 12, to the Vermont Academy of Science and Technology at Vermont Technical College in Randolph Center, Vermont?

**RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

**That the State Board of Education grant renewal of general independent school approval, to serve students in grade 12, to the Vermont Academy of Science and Technology at Vermont Technical College in Randolph, Vermont. This approval is for three years, through June 30, 2010, to coincide with their New England Association of Schools & Colleges' (NEAS&C) Commission on Institutions of Higher Education approval period.**

**Approval is subject to the condition that the school immediately report to the Department of Education whenever changes occur in enrollment, programs, policies, facilities, financial capacity, staffing or administration, during the approval period.**

**STATUTORY AUTHORITY:** Title 16 V.S.A. §166(b)

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

1. In the fall of 1989, Vermont Technical College (VTC) established the Vermont Academy of Science and Technology (VAST) for students in grade 12, with a special interest and aptitude in the areas of math and science. The students were afforded the opportunity to spend their senior year of high school at VTC completing both requirements for high school graduation, by agreement with the sending schools, and the first year of an associate degree program in engineering technology.
2. Vermont Technical College was accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges' (NEAS&C) Commission on Technical and Career Institutions for many years until the college went from a two-year to a four-year school. At that time, the college was required to seek accreditation through NEAS&C's Commission on Institutions of Higher Education. This Commission granted initial accreditation status at their Board of Trustees meeting on April 20, 2006. The college will be expected to submit a report to the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education prior to the spring of 2008. The next regularly scheduled evaluation will be conducted in the fall of 2010. NEAS&C is an accrediting agency listed in State Board of Education Rule 7320 and recognized for approval purposes.

3. The Vermont Academy of Science and Technology received preliminary approval from the State Board of Education from June 20, 1989 through June 30, 1990. Subsequent renewals, has enabled VAST to hold State Board of Education approval continually since that time.
4. The VAST program is available at Vermont Technical College's campus in Randolph and at a satellite campus in Williston.
5. There were 35 students enrolled in VAST for the 2006-2007 school year.

**COST IMPLICATIONS:** None

**STAFF AVAILABLE:**

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**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**  
**Montpelier, Vermont**

**TEAM:** Independent & Federal Programs

**ITEM:** Will the State Board of Education grant renewal of general and special education independent school approval for a year-round program, to serve students ages 8-21, within the disability categories of learning impairment, specific learning disability, emotional disturbance, speech or language impairment, other health impairment, and multiple disabilities, to Bennington School Inc., Bennington, VT?

**RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

**That the State Board of Education grant renewal of general and special education independent school approval for a year-round program, to serve students ages 8-21, within the disability categories of learning impairment, specific learning disability, emotional disturbance, speech or language impairment, other health impairment, and multiple disabilities, to Bennington School Inc., Bennington, VT. This approval is for five years, through June 30, 2011.**

**Approval is subject to the condition that the school immediately report to the Department of Education whenever changes occur in enrollment, programs, policies, facilities, financial capacity, staffing, or administration, during the approval period.**

**STATUTORY AUTHORITY:** Title 16 V.S.A. §166(b)  
Title 16 V.S.A. §2953(e)

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

1. Bennington School, Inc. is a residential school designed to provide academic, social, behavioral, and therapeutic services to male and female students ages 8-21 within the disability categories of learning impairment, specific learning disability, emotional disturbance, speech or language impairment, other health impairment, and multiple disabilities. The school philosophy is a reality-based approach; the school believes that students have the right to be treated in a fair, consistent, and therapeutic manner. All students participate in 24-hour clinical, educational, and residential programming. The long-term goal of the program is for students to maximize their potential, to develop independent living skills, and then to return to a more traditional setting.
2. Bennington School was last granted renewal of general and special education independent school approval by the State Board of Education on February 18, 2003 through June 30, 2006.
3. On behalf of the Commissioner, Julie Kuk and Pat Pallas Gray conducted an on-site visit March 28-30, 2006.

4. Bennington School, Inc. has two main campuses and several houses in the community. The main campus, Fairview, includes two male residential dormitories, an educational building with nine classrooms, an automotive shop, a basketball & volleyball court, and playing fields. The clinical building, including the admissions office, is located directly across the street from the main campus. Stoddard House, which is two houses down from the admissions office, provides residential dormitory space for four male students. Another dormitory in Sunderland provides residential space to accommodate six male students who are educated at a site in Sunderland. The Vail House includes dormitory and classroom spaces for a maximum of eight male students who have committed sexual offenses or who have been suspected of sexual misconduct. The seven male residents at the Manning House, which focus on students with substance abuse issues, are educated at the Fairview Main Campus. The residential female students are accommodated in the Main House, Cottage and Grandma Moses Dorms on the Mattison Road Campus, which provides accommodations for twenty-five students. An additional space, the Frost Dorm, housing seven female students is located a short distance from the Mattison Campus where they also attend classes. At the main two school buildings on the Mattison Campus there are seven classrooms. The Judi Funn House, which is also located on Mattison Road, has dormitory space for nine female students and has one classroom. A cottage located next to the Judi Funn House provides office space for clinical staff. Each educational site is adequate to meet the needs of the students in the program. The facilities meet all state and federal health and safety regulations and are handicapped accessible.
5. The minimum course of study, as prescribed in 16 V.S.A. §906, is provided and adapted to the age and abilities of the students. There were 103 students enrolled on the visit dates. Forty-one of the 103 were Vermonters, and the gender split was 70 males to 33 females. Support services include a library, weekly counseling services, social services to facilitate the students' re-entry into the community, testing services, medical services, and psychiatric services. Bennington School's philosophy is to exhaust all programming options prior to considering the termination of a student rather than discharging a student at the first sign of difficult behavior.
6. The school is coordinated by an executive director, a clinical director and an admissions director, and through the services of residential, educational, clinical, physical plant, training, IT, medical, and office personnel. Direct support for the school staff is provided by an education coordinator, a licensed special education coordinator, program managers, a consulting speech and language pathologist, and a consulting special educator. The following information provides the educational staffing patterns by campus or house.
  - Fairview Middle School, grades 6-8, self-contained classes:
    - a middle school day program manager
    - a full-time elementary educator
    - a part-time licensed special educator, and
    - two paraeducators.
  - Fairview High School, grades 9-12, rotating classes:
    - a day program manager
    - subject area teachers for English, science, math and history, and
    - two paraeducators

- Fairview High School, grades 9-12, self-contained classes:
  - a day program manager
  - subject area teachers for English, science, math, history, living arts,
  - a part-time licensed special education, and
  - two paraeducators.
  
- Vail High School, grades 9-12, self-contained classroom:
  - a day program manager
  - subject area teacher for English, history, science, math
  - a part-time licensed special educator
  - two paraeducators, and
  - two travel or medical appointment paraeducators.
  
- Sunderland School, grades 6-9, self-contained classroom:
  - two day program managers
  - subject area teachers for English/health, history, science, math
  - a part-time licensed special education, and
  - one paraeducator.
  
- Mattison Campus, grades 9-12, rotating classes:
  - a day program manager
  - subject area teachers for math, history, English, science/health
  - a part-time special educator, and
  - seven paraeducators.
  
- Judi Funn Program, grades 6-8, self contained classes:
  - a full-time elementary educator
  - a special education/math educator
  - two paraeducators.

Title I services are available to all students at all sites. Two outdoor education instructors provide physical education and recreational opportunities to all the students. All staff members are qualified by degree, training, or experience for their positions.

7. The student health, attendance, and assessment records were reviewed and found to be in good order. Fire drills are held on a regular basis.
  
8. The school maintains an operating schedule that includes a total number of instructional hours each year which is not less than that required of a public school serving the same grades. The school operates year-round with students transitioning in and out of the program as needed.
  
9. The school submitted information about their financial capacity for the period of approval. The school participates in the rate setting program for Private Non-Medical Institutions (PNMI) through the Agency of Human Services.
  
10. Bennington School, Inc. has developed policies for admissions, discipline, and significant change in placement. These policies were reviewed and found to be appropriate.

11. Bennington School, Inc. will coordinate with Local Education Agencies (LEA) by maintaining educational records, participating in evaluation procedures, developing IEP's and planning for reintegration, implementing IEP's, and providing prior notice to the sending LEA regarding the need for a change in a student's program or placement.
12. The Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) is part of the school's philosophy and each student's placement is based on individual needs for a LRE.

**COST IMPLICATIONS:** None

**STAFF AVAILABLE:**

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**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**  
**Montpelier, Vermont**

**TEAM:** Independent & Federal Programs

**ITEM:** Will the State Board of Education grant an amendment to enable the Bennington Regional Day Program for the Deaf in Bennington, VT to serve children in grades K-8?

**RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

**That the State Board of Education grant an amendment to enable the Bennington Regional Day Program for the Deaf in Bennington, VT to serve children in grades K-8. This approval is for three years, through June 30, 2010, to coincide with their current approval date.**

**Approval is subject to the condition that the school immediately report to the Department of Education whenever changes occur in enrollment, programs, policies, facilities, financial capacity, staffing, or administration, during the approval period.**

**STATUTORY AUTHORITY:** Title 16 V.S.A. §166(b)  
Title 16 V.S.A. §2958(e)

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

1. The Vermont Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, Inc. was established in the spring of 1998 and incorporates Austine School and the William Center in Brattleboro, a regional program in Williston, a regional program in Bennington, and the Vermont Consultants for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. The mission of the Vermont Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, Inc. is to provide an education for the deaf and hard of hearing students which promotes lifelong learning. This includes general knowledge of life, linguistic development, reasoning and problem solving, cultural awareness, social responsibility, personal growth and collaboration with students, families, and the deaf and hearing communities.
2. The Bennington Regional Day Program serves deaf and hard of hearing male and female students, with secondary disabilities of speech or language impairment, specific learning disabilities, other health impairment, and orthopedic impairment. The maximum number of students to be served in this program is ten.
3. The Bennington Regional Day Program was last granted general and special education independent school approval by the State Board of Education on February 21, 2006 through June 30, 2010, to coincide with the approval date for Austine School and the William Center.
4. The town of Bennington has voted to move all their six graders to the middle school beginning in the Fall of 2007. Catamount Elementary School, which currently houses the

Bennington Regional Day Program, also will be closing. As a result, the elementary students in the program will be moved to the middle school, which will enable the program to serve students in grades K-8. A preschool program will be housed at a different site to enable mainstreaming into art and physical education classes.

5. The Bennington Regional Day Program will be staffed by two full-time licensed educators: one working with the preschool population; the other with the elementary-aged students. There also is a full-time classroom aide/interpreter.
6. The minimum course of study, resources, and support services will remain the same. The students will be included in various classes at the public school and utilize the school library, cafeteria, and gymnasium.

**COST IMPLICATIONS:** None

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**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**  
**Montpelier, Vermont**

**TEAM:** Independent & Federal Programs

**ITEM:** Will the State Board of Education grant an amendment to enable Killington Mountain School in Killington, VT to serve students in grade six?

**RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

**That the Vermont State Board of Education grant an amendment to enable Killington Mountain School of Killington, Vermont, to serve students in grade six. This approval is for two years through June 30, 2009, to coincide with their current approval date.**

**Approval is subject to the condition that the school immediately report to the Department of Education whenever any changes occur in enrollment, programs, policies, facilities, financial capacity, staffing, or administration during the approval period.**

**STATUTORY AUTHORITY:** Title 16 V.S.A., Section 166(b)

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

1. Killington Mountain School (KMS) was established in 1974. The school is a boarding and day school which provides a winter term of tutorial services for college preparatory students with an interest in pursuing competitive ski racing, freestyle moguls/freeride, and snowboard competition.
2. Killington Mountain School was last approved by the State Board of Education on August 17, 2004 through June 30, 2009.
3. Killington Mountain School is requesting an amendment to enable the school to serve students in grade six. These students will be served in the Development Program, which will be a two-week program offered for three sessions each year. KMS' current approval enables them to serve students in grades 7-12.
4. Killington Mountain School submitted their minimum course of study for the sixth grade. KMS has the resources, including professional staff, to meet the needs of these students.

**COST IMPLICATIONS:** None

**STAFF AVAILABLE:**

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**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**  
**Montpelier, Vermont**

**TEAM:** Independent & Federal Programs

**ITEM:** Will the State Board of Education acknowledge that Saint Monica School in Barre and Saint Michael School in Montpelier will become one school entity operating on two campuses and will be known as Central Vermont Catholic School?

**RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

**That the State Board of Education acknowledge that Saint Monica School in Barre, VT and Saint Michael School in Montpelier, VT will become one school entity operating on two campuses and will be known as Central Vermont Catholic School.**

**Approval is subject to the condition that the school immediately report to the Department of Education whenever changes occur in enrollment, programs, policies, facilities, financial capacity, staffing, or administration, during the approval period.**

**STATUTORY AUTHORITY:** Title 16 V.S.A. §166(b)

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

1. Catholic elementary schools in the State of Vermont are accredited by the Roman Catholic Diocesan Board of Education, an accrediting agency recognized by the State Board of Education and listed in Rule 7320 of the Board's Manual of Rules and Practices.
2. St. Monica School in Barre, which serves students in grades K-8, and St. Michael School in Montpelier, which serves students in grades K-5, were last granted approval by the State Board of Education on August 19, 2003, through June 30, 2008.
3. The Superintendent of Schools for The Roman Catholic Diocese of Burlington notified the Department that a new entity was being created which will be called Central Vermont Catholic School. This school will have one school board that will function for both campuses and there will be one budget. This decision was made in light of enrollment losses and increased financial costs. The structure of the school on each campus will remain the same for this school year, and the effective date for this change is July 1, 2007.
4. Central Vermont Catholic School will have two principals to oversee the program, one at each campus. The minimum course of study will be the same on each campus, and decisions about staffing will be based on the enrollment projections for the upcoming school year.

5. Saint Monica School has already been accepted as a candidate for accreditation with the New England Association of Schools & Colleges (NEAS&C). NEAS&C has been apprised of the upcoming change and has agreed to visit both campuses, which will become Central Vermont Catholic School. NEAS&C is an accrediting agency recognized by the State Board of Education and listed in Rule 7320 of the Board’s Manual of Rules and Practices.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:** N/A

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